

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 5374

EXDIS HANDLE AS NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDEV, SF, WA
SUBJECT: NAMIBIA: U.S. LIAISON OFFICE IN WINDHOEK

1. AS WE APPROACH THE TIME TO CONSIDER ACTIVATION OF A
U.S. LIAISON OFFICE IN WINDHOEK, WE NEED TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT
SOME IMPLICATIONS AND POSSIBLE DIFFICULTIES BEYOND THOSE
RAISED EARLIER (PRETORIA 4510).

2. WE HAVE IN MIND THE POSSIBILITY THAT OUR ESTABLISHMENT
OF AN OFFICIAL PRESENCE IN WINDHOEK MAY STIMULATE EFFORTS
BY OTHERS TO DO THE SAME, ALTHOUGH SUCH MAY OCCUR EVEN
WITHOUT A LEADE FROM US. AMONG STATES WHICH MIGHT BE
INTERESTED COULD BE SOME OF THE FRONT LINE OR OAU STATES
AND POSSIBLY EVEN THE SOVIET UNION OR ITS SURROGATES.
THE USSR MIGHT INSIST IT HAS THE RIGHT TO A PRESENCE
BECAUSE OF ITS MEMBERSHIP ON THE SECURITY COUNCIL,
WHICH IS CHARGED WITH A SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE
TERRITORY. A SIMILAR CLAIM MIGHT BE THE COUNCIL FOR
NAMIBIA OR ITS CURRENT CHAIRMAN, ZAMBIA. THE DIFFI-
CULTIES SUCH PRESENCE WOULD CAUSE WITH SOUTH AFRICA ARE
OBVIOUS.

3. IT IS CONCEIVABLE THE SYG AND AHTISAARI WILL NOT WANT
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PAGE 02 PRETOR 05374 121408Z

ANYONE LOOKING SO CLOSELY OVER THEIR SHOULDERS. THE FIVE,
BEING RESPONSIBLE FOR THE NAMIBIA INITIATIVE AND HAVING
UNDERTAKEN TO SEE IT THROUGH TO ITS CONCLUSION, HAVE SOME
CLAIM PERHAPS TO A SPECIAL STATUS. ON THE OTHER HAND,
THIS MAY NOT BE ADEQUATE FOR THE SYG OR UNSR, WHO MIGHT
FIND OUR PRESENCE AWKWARD IF IT SERVED TO CREATE PRESSURE
FOR UNWELCOME AND COMPLICATING INTRUSIONS BY OTHERS

CLAIMING A RIGHT TO LIAISON.

4. THE GERMANS AND BRITISH WILL ALSO WANT TO BE IN WINDHOEK. THE FORMER HAVE LONG HAD OFFICE AND RESIDENCE FACILITIES THERE AND, DESPITE FORMAL CLOSURE OF THEIR CONSULATE LAST YEAR, HAVE CONTINUED TO OPERATE OFFICIALLY THROUGH A LOCAL EMPLOYEE IN NAMIBIA AND OCCASIONAL VISITS BY CONSULAR OR EMBASSY OFFICERS. THE BRITISH TELL US THAT THEY HAVE JUST PURCHASED A RESIDENCE IN WINDHOEK, PRESUMABLY FOR THE NEW NAMIBIAN AFFAIRS OFFICER THEY HAVE IN PRETORIA NOW WHO EXPECTS TO BE STATIONED IN WINDHOEK BY THE END OF THE YEAR.

5. AS SEEN FROM HERE, IT APPEARS EVIDENT THAT THE MATTER WILL REQUIRE CAREFUL HANDLING BY US AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE FIVE. WE MAY WANT TO CONSIDER ADOPTING A TDY POSTURE IN THE EARLY STAGES, AND MAY IN FACT BE OBLIGED TO RESORT TO SOME SUCH DEVICE UNTIL WE HAVE A CLEARER NOTION OF WHAT SAG, UNN AND OTHER ATTITUDES ARE LIKELY TO BE. PERSONNEL DESIGNATED TO MAN THE LIAISON OFFICE COULD PERHAPS BE ASSIGNED TO PRETORIA, WHILE IN REALITY SPENDING THE BULK OF THEIR TIME IN NAMIBIA. TOO LARGE A STAFF, HOWEVER, WOULD MAKE IT DIFFICULT TO FINESSE THE SAG CLAIM OF JURISDICTION AND AT THE SAME TIME IT COULD ATTRACT THE ATTENTION AND PERHAPS OBJECTIONS OF STATES WHICH CANNOT USE THIS ROUTE.
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PAGE 03 PRETOR 05374 121408Z

6. WE WOULD APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT'S THINKING ON THIS POTENTIALLY DELICATE PROBLEM.
EDMONDSON

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